Reinhart gets game-winner as Sabres prevail

Hutton makes 27 saves as Buffalo holds on to 3-2 lead for victory. | PAGE C1

THE BUFFALO NEWS

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Father Baker's successor accused of molesting boys

Depew, Hamburg men file lawsuits

BY JAY TOKASZ
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Rev. Joseph McPherson, who died in 1982, oversaw Our Lady of Victory service agencies.

A priest who for years oversaw the legacy of Father Nelson H. Baker – the Buffalo Diocese's sainthood candidate – is accused in two recently filed lawsuits of sexually abusing boys in Our Lady of Victory programs he oversaw.

A 76-year-old Depew man alleged in one of the filings that Monsignor Joseph M. McPherson molested him in 1951, when he was 8 years old and living at St. Joseph's Male Orphan Asylum in Lackawanna.

In the second case, a Hamburg man accused McPherson of plying him with alcohol and molesting him from 1966 to 1967, when he was 14 to 15 years old and a student at Baker Hall, a residential school for troubled youth.

The orphan asylum and Baker Hall were part of Our Lady of Victory Homes of Charity, a conglomerate of human services agencies led for years by Baker, whose legendary work on behalf of the poor and orphaned children prior to his 1936 death is the basis of a canonization cause.

The lawsuits were the first to allege abuse by McPherson, who died in 1982 at age 73. In 2018, the Buffalo Diocese added McPherson to its list of priests with substantiated allegations of abuse of a minor.

Ordained in 1936, McPherson served briefly as assistant pastor to Baker before the famous priest died. McPherson also was Diocesan Youth Director in the late 1940s. In 1949, McPherson became Baker's second successor as chief administrator of OLV Homes of Charity, a post he held for 30 years.

Now known as OLV Human Services, the organization continues to operate Baker Hall, as well as day care, special education programs, residential treatment for children and adults, foster care and outpatient clinics, among other services.

Attorney John J. Flaherty of Amherst filed a Child Victims Act lawsuit Friday in State Supreme Court on behalf of a 76-year-old man.

The defendants are the Buffalo Diocese; Our Lady of Victory Infant Home; "Father Baker's," the nickname often used to describe the organizations under the Our Lady of Victory

See **Lawsuit** on Page A8

A NEW TOOL TO FIGHT CRIME

Area police agencies got a look Tuesday at a non-lethal tool to stop crime suspects that goes back to the cowboys – a bolo fired like a taser. *Story on Page B1*

Stone prosecutors quit case over Justice Dept. call for lenient sentence

BY KATIE BENNER, SHARON LAFRANIERE AND ADAM GOLDMAN
NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON – Four prosecutors abruptly withdrew Tuesday from the case of Roger Stone, President Trump's longtime friend, after senior Justice Department officials intervened to recommend a more lenient sentence for crimes he committed in a bid to protect the president.

In an extraordinary decision overruling career lawyers, the Justice Department recommended an unspecified term of incarceration for Stone instead of the prosecutors' request of a punishment of seven to nine years. The move coincided with Trump's declaration on Twitter early Tuesday that the government was treating Stone too harshly.

The development immediately prompted questions about whether the Justice Department was bending to White House pressure or simply trying to correct overzealous prosecutors. The gulf between the prosecutors and their Justice Department superiors burst into public view the week before Stone was to be sentenced for trying to sabotage a congressional investiga-

See **Stone** on Page A8

Sanders leads Buttigieg, Klobuchar in close N.H. race

Getty Images

Supporters of Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders watch the results come in at a Sanders rally Tuesday night in Manchester as the Granite State conducts its first-in-the-nation primary.

Biden, Warren lagging far behind in primary

BY JONATHAN MARTIN AND ALEXANDER BURNS
NEW YORK TIMES

MANCHESTER, N.H. – Sen. Bernie Sanders took the lead in New Hampshire's Democratic presidential primary Tuesday night, maintaining a slim advantage over two moderate rivals, former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind., and Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., while the rest of the field lagged far behind.

CNN declared Sanders the winner just before midnight, with 94% of precincts reporting. Sanders had 71,034 votes and 26% of the vote; Buttigieg had 66,604 votes and 24.4%; and Klobuchar had 53,946 votes and 19.7%.

What's ahead

FEB. 22
Nevada
Caucus – 48 delegates

FEB. 29
South Carolina
Primary – 63 delegates

MAR. 3
Super Tuesday
Alabama, American Samoa, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Democrats Abroad, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia

The results were a grave disappointment to former Vice President Joe Biden and Sen. Elizabeth Warren, two candidates who were once tied at the top of national polls but have faded in recent months. Neither candidate reached double-digit support in vote percentages Tuesday night.

Even as results showed him headed for fourth or perhaps fifth place, Biden had left New Hampshire and headed to an event in South Carolina, a state he hopes might be able to salvage his candidacy. South Carolina would be the first state in the primary where the preference of the black voters who have buoyed Biden's campaign will be reflected.

"I do love New Hampshire, and I mean it," Biden said in Columbia, S.C., Tuesday night, with a livestream carry-

See **Primary** on Page A4

Ortt quits NY-27 race, offers some parting shots

BY ROBERT J. MCCARTHY
NEWS POLITICAL REPORTER

When Robert G. Ortt ended his quest on Tuesday for the Republican nomination to succeed Chris Collins in Congress, his observations dwelled on realities.

The state senator from North Tonawanda recognized that Christopher L. Jacobs had wrapped up the GOP nomination for an April 28 special election, and that his Senate colleague would have plenty of money for what lies ahead.

He also noted his failure to win the Conservative Party nod, despite its Legislative Scorecard Award for his 100% support of conservative issues in the Senate.

"Even though in my heart I wanted to continue," he said, "we have decided to withdraw and run for re-election to the Senate."

See **Ortt** on Page A8

Mark Mulville/Buffalo News

State Sen. Robert G. Ortt will run for re-election to the Senate after bowing out of the race to replace Rep. Chris Collins in 27th District.

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WEATHER
Cloudy most of the day. High 37, low 30. Details on Page B14.

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